

From: ROB T <rktmu [REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2019 3:06 PM
To: ATR-LitIII-Information (ATR) <ATR.LitIII.Information@ATR.USDOJ.gov>
Subject: To Assistant Attorney General Makan Delrahim:

My name is Rob Thomas and I am a songwriter, performer and producer. But I write to you today as a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) as I understand that the Department of Justice has opened its review of the ASCAP and BMI Consent Decrees. I strongly feel that this is great opportunity for the DOJ to make positive changes so that songwriters, composers and producers can earn a fair living in the digital age.

With my band Matchbox Twenty and as a solo artist I have been fortunate to earn a living in music for the past 23 years. I have had the privilege of experiencing success with my own hits such as "Push," "3Am" and "If You're Gone" as well as hits I've written or co-written for other artists like "Smooth" for Santana.

I have watched with great concern as many of my hardworking fellow songwriters are unable to earn fair compensation for their music as the industry has changed so drastically at the expense of music creators. It is especially frustrating since songwriters are the foundation of the music industry and the words and melodies we create become the songs that move people around the world, and boost the profits of major corporations.

I fully support ASCAP and BMI's recommendations for reforming the 78-year-old Consent Decrees. The outdated decrees are keeping our performing rights organizations under restrictions that don't reflect the realities of today's world. As songwriters, all we are asking is for our work to be valued fairly, as it would in a free market, just like everybody else. ASCAP and BMI's proposal would provide a fair and flexible framework for music licensing that works for all stakeholders.

I am asking for a level playing field so that I and my fellow songwriters have a decent shot at making an honest living from what we do best: create music that connects with listeners around the world.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,
Rob Thomas